

Strand Historic District,  
Thomas Jefferson League Building  
2301-2307 Strand  
Galveston  
Galveston County  
Texas

HABS No. TX-3296 F

HABS  
TEX  
84-GALV,  
38F--

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20243

HABS  
TEX  
84-GALV,  
38F-

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS NO. Tx-3296 F

THOMAS JEFFERSON LEAGUE BUILDING

Location: 2301-2307 Strand Avenue, Galveston, Galveston County, Texas.

Present Owner: George and Cynthia Mitchell

Present Use: Restaurant, speciality shops and offices.

Significance: This Renaissance Revival style structure represents one of many building types erected in the second half of the nineteenth century which used iron arcades on the first floor.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION:

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1871
2. Architect: Unknown
3. Original and subsequent owners: The building was built and owned by Thomas Jefferson League and divided into three portions as rental units. The original tenants included: Isaac Bernstein and Company, clothiers; Robinson and Company, stationery and printing; and Wolston, Wells and Vidor, cotton factors and commission merchants. In 1884, the firm of S. Jacob, Bernheim and Company, wholesale clothing dealers and manufacturers, occupied the entire building.

By 1893 the building was again occupied by several smaller concerns. Owned by J.C. League, brother to the original builder, tenants included the Pacific Company and Island City Manufacturers, also clothing manufacturers. J.C. League also had an office in the building, listing himself as "J.C. League, Capitalist".

The building changed hands in 1921 when League sold the building to Ben Blum and Company, a wholesale hardware outlet. This firm owned and occupied the building until 1972.

In 1973, the Galveston Historical Foundation purchased the building through its Strand Revolving Fund and sold it three years later to George and Cynthia Mitchell.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: Thomas Jefferson League (1834-74) erected this building in 1871. T.L. Juneman was carpenter and Hugh Pritchard was the mason.

The ground floor arcade was fabricated by the Southern Ornamental Iron Works of New Orleans and procured through their Galveston agent Denis Cronan, whose name is stamped on an iron column.

5. Alterations and additions: In 1976, the building was purchased by George and Cynthia Mitchell for development as a restaurant, shops and offices.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

The T.J. League building was built on the site of the old "Moro Castle," a fashionable public bar and later as the Cohn Brothers Clothes emporium. This structure burned on December 3, 1869 after a fire broke out during a robbery.

League was an attorney and also the son-in-law of Samuel May Williams, a leading statesman of the early Texas Republic, a founder of Galveston, a wharf developer and a banker (see HABS No. TX-297, the Williams-Tucker House).

C. Bibliography:

1. Secondary and published sources:

"Breaking Ground", Galveston Daily News, May 17, 1871.

H. Rosenberg (sic) erecting block of stores on Strand at Tremont Street.

"Building", Galveston Daily News, June 16, 1871. Work resumed on League Building.

"Galveston Prosperity", Galveston Daily News, October 18, 1871.  
T.J. League Building is being completed. To be ready by December.

"Moro Castle", Galveston Daily News, January 4, 1872. Moro Castle built in 1840 by Moro Phillips of Philadelphia. T.J. "Jeff" League erected on two lots a large, new building, three stories, 100' x 120'. T.L. Juneman, carpenter; Hugh Pritchard, mason. Robinson and Company, printing, counting room furniture, stationary, and Wolston Wells and Vidor and I. Bernstein and Company, principal tenants.

"Southern Iron Works", Galveston Daily News, March 21, 1872.  
Southern Ornamental Iron Works, New Orleans. Denis Croran,  
local agent, supplied iron fronts for several new buildings,  
including League Building.

"Progressing", Galveston Daily News, October 8, 1872. Galvanized  
iron cornice being placed on building Tremont at Strand.

Galveston - The Commerical Metropolis..., (1885), p. 75.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The three story building measures 110' x 120' and is constructed of brick. Renaissance Revival in style, this structure contains iron window labels and an iron single-story arcade. This arcade is formed by a series of squared posts with recessed panels, simple square capitals and brackets and dentils in the cornice. Paired one-over-one light windows are recessed and located between the posts.

Prepared by: John C. Garner, Jr.  
Director  
Galveston Architecture Inventory  
December 1966

## PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

The Galveston Project was jointly sponsored by the National Park Service, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation and the Galveston Historical Foundation, Inc., and developed under the direction of James C. Massey, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. The historical data was written by John C. Garner, Jr., acting as the Director of the Galveston Architecture Inventory. The written data was edited for transmittal to the Library of Congress in the summer of 1980 by Kent R. Newell of the HABS staff. The photographs were taken by Allen Stross in the summer of 1967.